

## Capturing quantitative data into SPSS

1. Create an SPSS data template completing the sections in the variable view first.
2. Variable name:
  - a. Begin each variable name with a letter.
  - b. Don't have spaces within variable names.
  - c. Don't use characters other than letters and numbers except the underscore ( \_ ) character.
  - d. Be sure that the first eight letters of each name are unique so that even if the names are truncated to that length you will still be able to identify your variable names.
3. Specify the variable type, usually Numerical (for numbers) or String (for words)
4. Specify the variable length (Usually about 11 for numerical variables, and different lengths for string)
5. Specify the labels: A description of the variable to be entered (Like the question/statement wording on the questionnaire)
6. Complete the category values, eg: 1 for male, 2 for female
7. Specify the missing values, eg, 0 or blank or 99 for missing values
8. Specify the data types, eg nominal if the variable is categorical, scale if the variable is ratio or interval; etc.
9. Each respondent in the study must be numbered consecutively. This number must also be written on the cover of the questionnaire.
10. All the responses to closed questions in the questionnaire must be coded, i.e.:  
Race: 1 for Black, 2 for Coloured, 3 for White, 4 for Indian.  
Gender: 1 for Male, 2 for Female.  
Yes/No questions: 1 for "Yes" and 2 for the "No" responses.  
etc.
11. Go to the Data view to capture the data from the questionnaires. Only the numerical codes are captured.
12. Each row contains all the responses to one questionnaire and each column contains the information for one variable, i.e. the responses to one question.
13. The responses to Likert scale questions must also be captured as numbers: using 1 for "strongly disagree" and up to 5 for "strongly agree", or vice versa.
14. If there are sections or questions where respondents can tick more than one of the options then there should be a column for each option. Thus there you capture a "1" if the option was ticked and leave the cell empty if the option was not ticked.